

# Halverson captures 'Citizen of the Year' recognition

Longtime Camas city administrator will retire in September

By HEATHER ACHESON  
Post-Record staff

When Lloyd Halverson was a boy, his parents once told him he was "born under a lucky star."

Now, reflecting back decades later, he believes they may have been right. The Camas city administrator counts himself very lucky to have had a long career in public service that has offered both interesting challenges and great rewards. He will retire from his full-time duties in September after spending more than 23 years in Camas as its only

city administrator.

In recognition of his commitment to the community, Halverson has been named the 2012 Citizen of the Year. He will be recognized along with several other honorees, including Business of the Year and



Lloyd Halverson

Educators of the Year, during a banquet on Tuesday, June 5.

"I was touched and honored by the recognition," he said. "It is a profound and moving award."

in public service from the time he was a teenager, after being inspired by Pres. John F. Kennedy's call in January 1961 for all Americans to "ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." The exact shape that desire would take, however, took some time to discover.

Halverson, 65, knew he wanted to pursue a career

in California, he went on to earn a bachelor's degree from the University of California, a master's in education from the University of Southern California and a master's in public administration from the University of San Francisco.

Initially, Halverson worked as teacher at a rural California high school

See Halverson, page A8

Continued from page A1

where he taught a variety of subjects including psychology, American history, world history and German. Later, he was director of a non-profit organization.

His first taste of municipal government management came when he was hired as city manager in Independence, Ore., in 1982.

"They took a chance on me," he said of the leadership in the small town, which at the time had a population of 3,600. "I had prior to that been in a city hall only once."

He spent seven years in Independence until being hired in 1989 by then-Camas Mayor Nan Henriksen. He was the city's first administrator.

"I was looking for someone whose strengths were different from mine, so that together we'd make the best mayor possible," she said. "Lloyd seemed great with detail and follow through. I knew he would do an excellent job of managing staff, coordinating departments and day-to-day operations within City Hall so that I, as a part-time mayor, could focus on community leadership, long-term vision, intergovernmental cooperation and other outreach efforts."

Halverson said the job was appealing for a number of reasons.

"I was excited by the vision Mayor Nan had for the community's future, which was also supported and sustained by the community," he said. "I thought it was a good fit with a dynamic series of challenges."

Since that time, Halverson has worked for a total of four Camas mayors. These include Henriksen for three years, Dean Dossett for 12 years, Paul Dennis for seven years, and Scott Higgins since

his appointment in June 2011 and election the following November.

Higgins, who served on the City Council for more than nine years before becoming mayor, said Halverson knows implicitly the values of the community and has a special ability to pinpoint the win-win aspect of many situations. Guided by the leadership of each new mayor, he has helped to create a prosperous community.

"I think Lloyd's imprint on the city will be felt for years to come," he said.

Halverson, who is always quick to emphasize that any accomplishments also involved the work of the "city team," is credited with diversifying the city revenue base through the annexation and designation of approximately 1,400 acres for the development of a business park, and setting aside hundreds of acres for parks and open space.

"I am so delighted that Lloyd has carried on implementing the vision for a stronger and more livable Camas we worked so hard on together more than 20 years ago," Henriksen said. "Much of our wonderful parks and green space system and new industrial development have been due to Lloyd's tenacity and follow-through."

Halverson has said that determination to secure property for green space has existed since his first day on the job. During the past 20 years, he helped secure more than \$6.5 million in funding from outside resources to acquire, develop and improve local parks, trails and open space areas. Some of the most notable include the Washougal River Greenway, Heritage Park, Fallen Leaf Lake Park and Lacamas Park.

"I think parks give people the opportunity to see one another, to communicate, and to meet their

neighbors and develop an affection for them," he said. "Those are the things that bind us together."

In 1990, with a population of 6,442, Camas had 355 acres of open space including four developed parks and four miles of trails. Today, the city of more than 20,000 people has 1,562 acres of open space including 13 developed parks and 22 miles of trails.

Halverson's expertise in municipal government has been sought by governments beyond the borders of Camas.

In 1998, and 1999, he served as a municipal advisor in Poland for 15 months. Later on, he helped establish a Sister City relationship between Camas and the Polish cities of Zabierzow, Krapkowice and Morawica. Numerous delegations from Camas and Poland, from students to city officials, have traveled back and forth as part of the formally recognized relationship.

In 2010, Halverson took a leave of absence from his duties in Camas to go to work for the City of Washougal. It was a pivotal time for the neighboring city as it was making the transition to a new city administrator and wading through a particularly tumultuous time in its governmental history.

Halverson served as acting Washougal city administrator in January and February 2010, and provided professional services in March and April 2010 assisting with the recruitment, screening, selection and placement of a new Washougal city administrator.

Washougal Mayor Sean Guard said Halverson was an invaluable resource during that time.

"What I really needed was someone I could trust implicitly, who could help

fill the gaps, help us recruit a talented pool of city administrator applicants, and who could assist in evaluating the condition of the city, including our resources and top-tier employees, and help me get a grip on the tasks needing to be accomplished first," Guard said. "In seven weeks Lloyd did all of that and more. I cannot say enough how much of a help he was, both through his professional background as well as his way of cutting to the chase and getting things done."

Halverson's family, including his wife Ulrike and their four children, may have the most insight into what has motivated him throughout his career.

Lisa Halverson Algstam said she and her siblings agree that their father's commitment to creating a balanced family life and a balanced, livable community have been unwavering.

"More than once he has told us how he meets people in our community and is so proud that he works for them, the citizens of Camas," she said. "So in the end I think the thing he would be most proud of in his career would be balance."

Halverson agreed, adding that the Camas community has provided the framework for a multidimensional, fulfilling career.

"The dynamism in this community has kept this job interesting," he said. "It is not a static community where everything has been the same. There is a lot of movement and the challenge is getting it right."

"It's hard to express how exciting and thrilling it is," he continued. "I love this crazy job almost every day, and that's a blessing."